



# FOLLOW JOSEPH'S STORY

## AS HE DEVELOPS THE QUALITIES OF A HERO

### HONOR

ADHERING TO TRUTH, VALUES, AND PRINCIPLES BEYOND SELF

### ENTERPRISE

WORKING AT IMPORTANT THINGS, WHETHER THEY SEEM SMALL OR LARGE

### RESPONSIBILITY

CARRYING IMPORTANT PEOPLE AND THINGS THROUGHOUT LIFE

### ORIGINALITY

BEING A DREAMER, A THINKER, AN EXPLORER IN THE WORLD

So often in Scripture, heroes emerge in unlikely places. Take, for example, the story of Joseph, beginning in Genesis 37. Here was a younger brother amidst numerous older brothers who didn't like him. Joseph's brothers were jealous of how their father loved Joseph and gave him gifts. Because of their jealousy, they did not treat Joseph well and hated him (37:4). With a difficult childhood, of being misunderstood and mistreated by his many brothers, Joseph still grew up to become a HERO.

#### PART 1: HONOR

At seventeen years old, Joseph was given the responsibility of pasturing the flocks along with his brothers, even though he was young (37:2). This could not have been an easy task, working alongside brothers who did not like him. Yet, he still accepted this responsibility and did not try to get out of it.

When his brothers acted badly while watching the flock, Joseph reported them to their father (37:2). It would have been easier for him just to say nothing but Joseph acted with **Honor** by being truthful. He must have known telling the truth would not make his brothers happy but he told the truth anyway.

Joseph understood the cost of telling the truth. After having a strange dream about himself and his brothers, Joseph told the dream to his brothers, pleading with them to listen (37:6). His brothers did not like the dream Joseph had and hated him even more because of it (37:8).

When Joseph then had another dream, he could have kept that dream to himself and not told anyone. Instead, Joseph believed the dream was important and told not only his brothers but also their father, Jacob (37:10). Neither his brothers nor his father were happy with Joseph's dream. His father spoke harshly to him about the dream (37:10) and his brothers continued to be jealous (37:11).

**Honor** is learned when a person stands up for the truth even when other people don't like to hear the truth.

## PART 2: ENTERPRISE

After these two dreams, Joseph's brothers liked him even less than they did before. Yet, when Jacob told Joseph to once again go with his brothers to pasture the flock, Joseph obeyed (37:13). He understood that helping to take care of his family's sheep was important work.

Joseph understood about **Enterprise**, that there are things worth doing in the world – either large or small – that are important and needed, whether you really want to do them or not.

## PART 3: RESPONSIBILITY AND ORIGINALITY

So Joseph left his father's house and went to look for his brothers and the flock, to be obedient to Jacob. However, when Joseph arrived at the place his brothers were supposed to be, they weren't there. A man who saw him wandering about came up to him and Joseph asked the man if he had seen his brothers and their flock (37:16). The man told Joseph that he knew the brothers had moved the flock and the man told Joseph where (37:17). So Joseph went after his brothers.

Joseph could have turned around and went back home. He could easily have told his father he'd gone to the place he was told but they weren't there. Instead, Joseph showed **Responsibility** throughout his boyhood, including at this moment, by pursuing the flock. He also showed a sense of **Originality** as he thought about all the things he could do. Yes, he could go home and tell his father he couldn't find them. Or, he could go to the place they were supposed to be and try to figure out where they had gone.

**Responsibility** – being reliable and dependable in thought and action.

**Originality** – being a dreamer, a thinker and an explorer – means when you look for other ways to do what you need to do.

Often, the story of Joseph is remembered from the moment he is captured by his brothers, thrown in the pit and sold off in slavery, yet Joseph showed he was a **HERO** before that terrible day. Then, over the next several years, Joseph would need each of these characteristics of a **HERO** as he faced many challenges.

Have your group read the rest of Joseph's story then identify each time he exemplifies one of the **HERO** qualities he developed as a boy.



## ANSWERS

- When he was thrown into the pit and his coat, which was gift from his father, taken from him (37:23-24), Joseph would need to remember the importance of truth and continue to act **honorably**, even when his brothers did not.
- When he was sold into slavery (39:1), Joseph would need to remember the importance of **Enterprise**, to see the work he was given to do as a slave was still important and valuable.
- When he was put in charge over the whole house of Potiphar, he would need to show great **Responsibility** and he did. Potiphar praised Joseph and made him head over his entire house (39:6).
- When he was tempted by Potiphar's wife, he would again need to act with **Honor**, to hold onto his values and principles and do what was right (39:8-9).
- When he was wrongly accused by Potiphar's wife and thrown in prison unjustly, Joseph survived by being a **HERO**. He acted **Honorably** toward his fellow prisoners and the guards. He showed great **Enterprise** by considering his work in the prison to be important. He accepted **Responsibility** for his fellow prisoners. He demonstrated **Originality** by finding ways to supervise whatever happened inside the prison (39:21-22).
- Joseph further showed that he was as a **HERO** when he became head of all Egypt and saved the country and his family from the seven years of famine.

A **HERO** doesn't need to jump higher than anyone else or run faster or be stronger. All of those things are wonderful and can be heroic. But the mark of a true **HERO** isn't just in what he does; the mark of a true **HERO** is in who he is. Who he is will then be displayed in what he does.



# WHEN A BOY IS A TRUE HERO, LIKE JOSEPH:

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HE IS ABLE TO OBEY HIS PARENTS EVEN WHEN  
WHAT THEY ASK IS HARD.

HE IS ABLE TO KNOW HE IS IMPORTANT AND SPECIAL TO GOD  
EVEN WHEN THOSE AROUND HIM CALL HIM NAMES.

HE IS ABLE TO SAY YES TO DIFFICULT JOBS BECAUSE HE KNOWS  
HE CAN FIND THE STRENGTH TO DO THEM.

HE IS ABLE TO TELL THE TRUTH EVEN WHEN  
IT COSTS HIM TO DO SO.

HE IS ABLE TO SEE HIS LIFE AS MORE THAN JUST WHAT  
IS HAPPENING TODAY; HE IS ABLE TO ENVISION  
A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR HIMSELF.

HE IS ABLE TO REMEMBER HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO DO RIGHT  
EVEN WHEN TEMPTED TO DO WRONG.

HE IS ABLE TO TRUST IN GOD TO LOVE HIM AND MAKE  
EVEN BAD THINGS RIGHT AGAIN.

HE IS ABLE TO LOOK AT OTHERS WITH FORGIVENESS  
AND COMPASSION.

